



SPECIAL COMMITMENT CENTER

Pierce County, Washington

POLICY: RESIDENT POSTAGE AND MAIL

POLICY NUMBER: 202

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Authorizing Source: SCC Contraband Policy 401 SCC Master Property Policy 231

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PURPOSE

Provides guidelines for handling resident postage and mail.

SCOPE

All staff and residents of the Special Commitment Center (SCC).

DEFINITION

Commercial Package means any package sent by businesses/catalogue companies.

Hobby Mail means any material approved by the Recreation Specialist Staff.

Legal Mail is correspondence to or from courts and court staff, attorneys and persons working for attorneys. Legal mail may also be mail to or from any local, county or state law enforcement agencies.

Personal Mail consists of letters, publications or packages delivered by the United States Post Office or by other established and authorized carriers.

Controlled Items are items not included on Master Property List, Inmate Store List, credit/debit cards, and checks.

Illegal Items are any intoxicants, narcotics, dangerous drugs, firearms, explosives, or dangerous weapons.

Restricted Items are items included on the Master Property List which do not follow approved specifications or which exceed quantity limitation.

POLICY

- A. Each resident is allotted the equivalent of twenty first class stamps per month at SCC's expense. Residents may use this allotment at their discretion. Postage allowance **shall not** be saved from month to month or transferred to other residents. Residents may send legal mail at no charge.
- B. If a resident needs additional stamps he/she may 1) purchase stamps from the Inmate Store, 2) if sufficient funds in his/her Resident Trust Account, reimburse SCC for postage via a Request to Transfer Funds, or 3) use stamps received through the mail.
- C. Postage is required for all resident mail.
- D. The Business Office **shall** record the amount of postage used by each resident in the Resident Postage Log.
- E. All outgoing letters/packages **shall** include at a minimum:
 - 1. A return address with resident's full committed name and may include any other legal name, the SCC PO Box, city, state and zip code in the upper left corner of the package/letter, and
 - 2. An address with the recipient's name, address, and zip code.

SCC **shall** return improperly addressed mail to the resident. If resident's last name is not on mail, SCC **shall** treat mail as "lost" and turn over to the Residential Care Manager for handling.

All incoming mail must have (minimally) the resident's last name; residents may use business names and titles as long as the last name is included in the address. Incoming mail without resident's name will be returned to sender.

- F. A resident's right to send/receive mail may be partially and/or temporarily restricted if sending mail 1) presents a danger to the resident or to any other person, 2) presents a threat, or 3) involves harassment. The Residential Care Manager **shall** evaluate these restrictions at least every fourteen days. Any restrictions on a resident mail **shall** be clearly documented in a Behavior Management Plan.
- G. Resident **shall** place his/her mail in unit mail box. If a package is too large for the mail box, resident **shall** give the package to a unit staff. Residents in Administrative Segregation **shall** have their mail picked up once during the shift.
- H. Residents **shall** open mail and **shall** "fan" mail out in the presence of staff who shall ensure mail does not contain illegal, restricted, or controlled items.

- I. Residents may utilize credit/debit cards but actual cards are restricted from unit; residents may retain number. Upon receiving a credit card the resident **shall** 1) inform staff of the business name and number of cards received; 2) be allowed to record the necessary information from the card, 3) in presence of staff destroy card(s) or place in mailing envelope and deposit in mail box for mailing out of SCC.
- J. All incoming resident packages **shall** be opened, x-rayed, and transferred to another container and documented on Resident Package Receipt. Exceptions may be made by staff for packages from recognized Record/Book Clubs.

Resident computers, CDs, and computer discs **shall** comply with the Master Property List.

If the package is marked "sacred items", staff **shall** route to the SCC contracted chaplain for handling.

All illegal items (see Policy 401) **shall** be confiscated and referred to the Residential Care Manager for final disposition.

If a resident receives restricted or controlled items, he/she has the following options:

- a) Non-food items may be disposed of or mailed elsewhere at resident's expense.
- b) Restricted food items may be disposed of or mailed elsewhere at the resident's expense.
- c) Videos/sexually explicit material may be disposed of or mailed elsewhere at resident's expense.

If resident opts to mail elsewhere, staff will rewrap package and affix an address label completed by the resident.

- K. Incoming/outgoing packages, including legal mail, may not exceed 15 pounds and will be returned to sender if exceeds this limit. Exceptions may be made by the Residential Care Manager for computers and electronic equipment.
- L. Incoming packages for each resident are limited to two personal packages and two commercial packages per month. Packages over these limits will be returned unopened to the sender at no expense to the resident.

Legal mail is not included in the package limit.

- M. Legal mail must be clearly marked "legal" and residents **shall** open mail in the presence of staff. Should a package contain items that are not considered legal material, staff will count package as personal.

- N. Incoming resident packages must be delivered by the US Postal Service, UPS, Federal Express, or other recognized commercial carrier. Resident may not receive mail brought to the facility by visitors (except legal papers from his/her attorney) unless the Clinical Director, Residential Care Manager, or designee has given prior written approval.

PROCEDURE

Action By

Action

A. Outgoing Mail

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Resident | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Addresses mail using minimum standards, and if legal marks "legal".2. If using a Request to Transfer Funds from requesting postage, attaches completed form to mail. Leaves "amount" blank if unknown and the Business Office will record.3. Places addressed mail in Unit mailbox.4. If mail is too large for the mail box, brings to unit desk staff.5. If sending package, has staff a) verify contents before taping and b) has staff sign package.6. If package is over 15 pounds, gets written approval from FT3 or higher. |
| Graveyard Staff | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Obtains all mail from resident mailbox and larger packages from behind staff desk.2. Logs out all "legal mail".3. Places all Requests to transfer funds in appropriate box behind staff desk.4. Takes all mail and packages to MICC mail room at end of shift. |
| Business Office Staff | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Checks mail for minimum address/return address.<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. If address/return address does not meet minimum standards, returns item to resident except,b. If resident's last name is not included in return address, gives to the Residential Care Manager for handling. |

2. If personal mail requires postage, checks Resident Postage Log and if balance is sufficient, meters mail and deducts from resident's personal postage allowance.
 - a. If balance is insufficient, notes the amount of postage needed and returns to resident.
3. If a Request to Transfer Funds is attached, meters if resident has adequate funds in his Resident Trust Account.
4. If mail marked "legal" requires postage, meters and records amount under "legal mail" in Resident Postage Log.
 - a. If there is a concern that mail may not meet SCC "legal" criteria, contacts the Legal Coordinator for approval to meter. If request to meter is not approved, returns mail to resident.
5. Provides Unit with a current printout of resident's unused personal postage allowance.
6. Forwards Resident Postage Log to Accounting at the end of the month.

B. Incoming Mail

**Residential
Unit Staff**

1. Delivers mail to Unit.
2. Hands mail to resident and asks resident to shake/fan out mail to ensure no illegal, controlled or restricted items.
 - a. If illegal items: confiscates and refers to Superintendent/Designee.
 - b. If controlled or restricted items; asks resident to choose disposition choice.
 - c. If credit/debit card: allows resident to record information, and observes resident destroy or mail out card.

Records business name, number of cards, name on card, and disposition.
 - d. If checks/money: writes a receipt and gives to resident. Places check and copy of receipt in envelope marked Business Office and places in Unit mail box.

3. Documents contents of incoming packages, removes any illegal, restricted or controlled items and signs Resident Package Receipt form.
4. Gives screened package to resident and secures resident's signature on the Resident Package Receipt form.

Resident

1. If any item is restricted or controlled, opts:
 - a. To dispose of item or,
 - b. To mail item at resident's expense. (Resident prepares address label, gives to staff.)

Recreation
Specialist

1. Informs Business Office staff of updates of allowable Hobby materials and residents in the Hobby Program.
2. Disposes of Hobby material deemed dangerous by mail staff.

Residential
Care Manager

1. Decides on disposition of resident mail which has no last name in the return address.
2. Reviews and documents recommendations regarding resident mail restrictions.
3. Makes final disposition on illegal items.
4. Approves/denies requests to mail packages weighing over 15 pounds.

Legal
Coordinator

1. Makes final disposition of mail marked "legal" which has been referred to determine if mail meets SCC "legal" criteria and therefore be mailed at SCC expense.